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**ACT of the GENERAL ASSEMBLY, anent a Solemn
National Fast and Humiliation, with the Causes thereof.**

At Edinburgh, November 12. 1690 Postmeridiem, Sess. 25.

THE General Assembly, Having taken into their most serious Consideration, the late great and general Detection of this Church and Kingdom, Have thought fit to Appoint a Day of Solemn Humiliation and Fasting, for Confession of Sins, and making Supplication to Our Gracious G O D, to forgive and remove the guilt thereof: In order whereunto, they have Ordained the Confession of Sins, and Causes of Fasting following, to be duly Intimat and Published; Recommending it most earnestly to all persons, both Ministers and others, That every one of us may not only search and try our own hearts and wayes, and stir up our selves to seek the Lord; But also in our Stations, and as we have access, Deal with one another, in all love and tenderness, to prepare for so great and necessary a Duty, that we may find mercy in God's sight, and He may be graciously Reconciled to our Land in our Lord Jesus, and take delight to dwell amongst us.

Although our gracious God hath of late, for His own Names sake, wrought great and wonderful things, for *Britain and Ireland*, and for this Church and Nation in particular; Yet the Inhabitants thereof have cause to remember their own evil wayes, and to loath themselves in their own sight for their Iniquities.

Alas! we, and our Fathers, our Princes, our Pastors, and People of all Ranks have sinned, and have been under great Transgression to this day: For though our gracious God shewed early kindness to this Land, in sending the Gospel amongst us, and afterward in our Reformation from Popish Superstition and Idolatry; and I T had the Honour, beyond many Nations of being after our first Reformation, solemnly devoted unto God, both Prince and People; yet we have dealt treacherously with the Lord, and been unstedfast in His Covenant, and have not walked suitably to our Mercies received from Him, nor obligations to Him: Through the mercy of God this Church had attained to a great purity of Doctrine, Worship and Government, but this was not accompanied with suitable personal Reformation, neither was our Fruit answerable to the pains taken on us by Word and Work; We had much Gospel-preaching, but too little Gospel-practice; too many went on in open wickedness, and some had but a form of Godliness, denying the power thereof; many also who had the Grace of God in truth fell from their first love, and fell under sad languishings and decays; and when for our sins the Anger of the Lord had divided us, and we were brought under the feet of strangers, and many of our brethren killed, others taken captive, and sold as slaves; yet we sinned still, and after we were freed from the yoke of strangers, in stead of returning to the Lord, and being led to Repentance by His Goodness, the Land made open Defection from the good ways of the Lord: many behaved as if they had been delivered to work abomination, the flood-gates of Impiety were opened, and a deluge of wickedness did overspread the Land. Who can without grief and shame remember the shameful debauchery and drunkenness that then was? And this accompanied with hor-

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rid and hellish cursing and swearing, and followed with frequent Filthiness, Adulteries and other Abominations, and the Reprover was hated, and he that departed from Iniquity made himself a reproach or prey. And when by these, and such like corrupt practices, mens Consciences were debauched, they proceeded to sacrifice the Interest of the Lord Jesus Christ, and Priviledges of his Church to the lusts and will of men; The Supremacy was advanced in such a way, and to such an height, as never any Christian Church acknowledged; The Government of the Church was altered, and Prelacie (which hath been always grievous to this Nation) introduced, without the Churches consent, and contrair to the standing Acts of our National Assemblies, both which the present Parliament hath (blessed be God) lately found; And yet nevertheless, of the then standing Ministry of *Scotland*, many did suddenly and readily comply with that alteration of the Government, Some out of Pride and Covetousness or Man-pleasing, some through infirmity or weakness, or fear of Man, and want of Courage and Zeal for God; many faithful Ministers were thereupon cast out, and many Insufficient and Scandalous men thrust in on their Charges, and many Families ruined, because they would not owne them as their Pastors.

And alas! it is undenyable, there hath been under the late Prelacie, a great decay of Piety, so that it was enough to make a man be nicknam'd a Phanatick, if he did not run to the same excess of riot with others.

And should it not be lamented, for it cannot be denied, there hath been in some a dreadful Atheistical Boldness against God, some have disputed the Being of G O D, and His Providence, the Divine Authority of the Scriptures, the Life to come, and Immortality of the Soul, yea and scoffed at these things.

There hath been also an Horrid Prophanation of the Holy and Dreadful Name of G O D, by cursing and swearing: Ah! there hath been so much Swearing and Forswearing amongst us, that no Nation under Heaven have been more guilty in this than we; some by swearing rashly or ignorantly, some falsely, by breaking their Oaths, and imposing and taking ungodly and unlawful Oaths and Bonds, whereby the Consciences of many have been polluted and seared, and many ruined and oppressed for refusing and not taking them.

There hath also been a great neglect of the Worship of God, too much in publick, but especially in families and in secret.

The wonted care of Religious sanctifying the Lord's Day is gone, and in many places the Sabbath hath been, and is shamefully prophaned.

The Land also hath been full of bloody Crimes, and Cities full of Violence, and much innocent Blood shed, so that Blood touched Blood; yea, *Sodom's* sins have abounded amongst us, Pride, fullness of Bread, Idleness, Vanities of Apparel, and shameful sensuality filled the Land.

And alas! how great hath been the Cry of Oppression, and Unrighteousness, Iniquity hath been established by a Law, there hath been a great perverting of Justice, by making and executing unrighteous Statutes and Acts, and sad Persecution of many for their Conscience towards God.

It is also matter of Lamentation, that under this great Defection there hath been too general a fainting, not only amongst Professors of the Gospel, but also amongst Ministers; yea, even amongst such, who in the main things did endeavour to maintain their Integrity, in not giving seasonable and necessary Testimony against the Defections and Evils of the Time, and keeping a due distance from them; and some on the other hand managed their Zeal with too little Discretion and Meekness.

It is also matter of Humiliation, that when Differences fell out amongst these, who did owne Truth, and bear witness against the Course of Defection, they were not managed with due Charity and Love, but with too much heat and bitterness, injurious Reflections used against pious and worthy men on all hands, and scandalous Divisions occasioned, and the Success of the Gospel greatly obstructed thereby; and some dangerous Principles drunk in; And after all this, there were shameful advances towards Popery, the Abomination of the Mass was set up in many places, and Popish Schools erected, and severals fell to Idolatry.

And though the Lord hath put a stop to the Course of Defection, and of His great mercy given us some reviving from our Bondage; yet we have sad cause to regrave and bemoan, that few have a due sense of our mercy, or walk answerable thereto, few are turned to the Lord in truth, but the wicked go on to do wickedly, and there is found amongst us to this day shameful ingratitude for our mercies, Horrid impenitency under our sins, yea, even amongst those, who stand most up for the Defence of the Truth: And amongst many in our Armies, there is woful Prophaneess and Debauchery. And though we profess to acknowledge, there can be no pardon of Sins, no Peace and Reconciliation with God, but by the Blood of Jesus Christ; yet few know Him, or see the Necessity and Excellency of the Knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ; few see their need of Him, or esteem, desire, or receive Him, as He is offered in the Gospel; few are acquainted with Faith in Jesus Christ, and living by Faith on Him, as made of the Father unto us, Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption; and few walk as becometh the Gospel, and imitate our Holy Lord in Humility, Meekness, Self-denial, Heavenly-mindedness, Zeal for GOD, and Charity towards Men: But as there is even untill now, a great contempt of the Gospel; a great Barrenness under it; So a deep Security under our Sin and Danger, a great want of Piety toward God, and Love towards Men, with a wofull Selfishness, every one seeking their own things, few the things of Christ, for the publick Good, or one anothers wellfare: And finally, the most part more ready to censure the sins of others, than to repent of their own.

Our Iniquities are increased over our heads, and our Trespasses are grown up unto the Heavens, they are many in number, and hainous in their nature, and grievously aggravated, as having been contrair to great Light and Love, under signal Mercies and Judgments, after Confession and Supplication, and notwithstanding of our Profession, Promises and solemn Vowing, and Covenanting with God to the contrair.

Have we not then sad cause of deep Sorrow and Humiliation? And may we not fear, if we do not repent, and turn from the evil of our wayes, and return to the Lord with all our hearts, that He return to do us evil, after He hath done us good, and be angry with us, untill He hath consumed us?

Let us therefore humble our selves by Fasting and Praying, let us search out our sins, and consider our wayes, and confess these, and other our sins, with Sorrow and Detestation; Let us turn unto the Lord with Fasting and weeping, and with mourning; Let us firmly Resolve and sincerely Engage, to Amend our ways and doings, and return unto the Lord our God, with all our heart, and earnestly pray, that for the blood of the Lamb of God, our sins may be forgiven, and our backslidings healed, and we may yet become a righteous Nation, keeping the Truth, that Religion and Righteousness may flourish, and Love and Charity abound, and all the Lord's People may be of one mind in the Lord: And in order to all these, that the Word of the Lord may have free course, and be

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glorified, and that the Preaching of the Word, and Dispensing of the Sacraments, may be accompanied with the wonted Presence, Power and Blessing of the Spirit of the Lord; That the Lord would preserve and bless our gracious *King and Queen, William and Mary*, and establish their Throne by Righteousness and Religion, and grant to these Nations, Peace and Truth together; and for that End, bless and prosper His Majesties Councils, and Forces by Sea and Land, and these of the Princes and States his Allies, for God and his Truth, that Inferior Rulers may rule in the fear of God, and Judges be clothed with Righteousness, and that many faithful Labourers may be sent out into the Lord's Vineyard, and they who are sent, may find mercy to be faithful, and be blest with Success, that Families may be as little Churches of Christ, and that the Lord would pour out His Spirit on all Ranks of People, that they may be holy in all manner of Conversation, and God may delight to dwell amongst us, and to do us good.

And while we pray for our selves, let us not forget our Brethren in Foreign Churches, with whom, alas! we had too little Sympathy; Nay, let us pray, that all the ends of the Earth, may see the Salvation of God; And that He would bring His antient people of the *Jews* to the acknowledgment of Jesus Christ; And that He would hasten the ruine of Romish Babylon, and advance the Reformation in Christendome, and preserve and bless the Reformed Churches; That He would pitie His oppressed People, the *French Protestants*, and gather them out of all places, whither they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day; And that He would be the Defence, Strength and Salvation of any of His People, who are in War or Danger by Infidel or Popish Adversaries, in *Europe or America*: And in particular, that the Lord would be Gracious to *Ireland*, and sanctifie to His People there, both their distress and deliverance, and perfect what concerneth them, that He would convert the Natives there to the Truth, and reduce that Land to Peace; And appoint Salvation for Walls and Bullwarks to *Brittain*.

For all these Causes and Reasons, The General Assembly hath Appointed the Second Thursday of *January* next, to be Observed in all the Congregations of this Church and Nation, as a day of Solemn Fasting and Humiliation, and Prayer, Beseeching and Obtesting all, both Pastors, and People of all Ranks to be sincere and serious, in Humiliation and Supplication, and universal Reformation, as they would wish to find mercy of the Lord, and have deserved wrath averted, and would obtain the Blessing of the Lord upon themselves and Posterity after them; And that the Lord may delight in us, and our Land may be as Married to Him. And Ordains all Ministers, either in Kirks or Meeting-houses, to read this present Act publickly from the Pulpit, a Sabbath or two before the said Day of Humiliation: and that the several Presbyteries take care, that it be carefully Observed in their respective bounds. And where, in regard of Vacancies, the Day hereby appointed, cannot be observed, the Assembly appoints the said Humiliation, to be kept some other Day with the first convenient opportunity. And Appoints the Commission for Visitation, to apply to the Council, for their Civil Sanction to the Observation thereof. *Extracted out of the Records of Assembly, by*

JO. SPALDING, *Clk. Syn. National.*

A Proclamation

A PROCLAMATION,

Anent a Solemn National Fast and Humiliation.



WILLIAM and MARY, by the Grace of G O D,
King and Queen of *Great Britain, France, and Ireland,*
Defenders of the Faith; To

Macers of Our Privy Council, or
Messengers at Arms, Our Sheriffs in that part, conjunct-
ly and severally, specially constitute, Greeting: Foras-
much, as the General Assembly of this Church, by their
Act, of the date the twelfth day of *November* instant;

hath appointed a Solemn National Fast and Humiliation, to be Obser-
ved in all the Kirks and Meeting-Houses of this Our Antient Kingdom; And
appointed their Commission for Visitation, to apply to the Lords o Our
Privy Council, for Our Civil Sanction to be interposed thereto; And they
having Applied accordingly: Therefore We, with Advice of the Lords of
Our Privy Council, Do hereby Command and Enjoin, That the said So-
lemn Fast and Humiliation be Religiously observed, by all persons throughout
this Kingdom, both in Kirks and Meeting-Houses, at the Diets, and in the
manner as by the above-mentioned Act of Assembly, hereto prefixed, is ap-
pointed; And that the same be read by all the Ministers, in manner therein-
mentioned. And to the end that so Pious and necessar a Duty may be pun-
ctually performed, and Our Pleasure in the Premisses fully known: Our
Will is herefore, and We Charge you straitly and Command, that inconti-
nent these Our Letters seen, ye pass to the Mercat-Cross of *Edinburgh*, and the
remanent Mercat-Crosses of the Head-Burghs of the several Shires and Stewar-
tries within this Kingdom, and in Our Name and Authority, make Publication
of the Premisses, that none may pretend ignorance. And we Ordain
Our Solicitor to dispatch Copies hereof to the Sheriffs of the several Shires,
and Stewarts of the Stewartries, or their Deputs, or Clerks, to be by them
Published at the Mercat-Crosses of the Head Burghs, upon receipt thereof,
and immediatly sent to the several Ministers, both in Kirks and Meeting-
Houses, to the effect they may read and intimat the same from their Pulpits,
and may seriously exhort all persons, to a sincere and devout observance there-
of, as they Regard the Favour and Blessings of the Almighty God, the Safety
and Preservation of both Church and State, and would avoid the Wrath of
God upon themselves and their Posterity, and as they will be answerable at
their peril. And Ordains these Presents to be Printed with the said Act of
Assembly, and these Presents to be Published in manner foresaid.

*Given under Our Signet at Edinburgh, the twenty first day of Novem-
ber. And of Our Reign, the second year, 1690.*

Per actum Dominorum Sti. Concilii.

GILB: ELIOT, Cls. Sti. Concilii.

G O D save King William and Queen Mary.

Edinburgh, Print
most

by Heir of Andrew Anderson, Printer to their
Majesties, Anno DOM. 1690.



